

1 Interview Summaries

1.1 Plum Creek Timber Company, Inc.

Interview Type	Phone, Private Company
Interview Date	January 17, 2002
Summary Date	January 17, 2002
Interviewer	AGI / Richard Sutton (rs@appgeo.com)
Interviewed:	Jim Hatch, jim.hatch@plumcreek.com

URL: <http://www.plumcreek.com/company/>

1.1.1 Overview

Plum Creek Timber Company, Inc. the second largest private timberland owner in the United States, owns 7.8 million acres in the Northwestern, Southern, and Northeastern regions of the country. Plum Creek holds more than 900,000 acres of land in Maine, owning multiple townships outright.

Plum Creek is a public company listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) and the Pacific Stock Exchange (PSE).

1.1.2 GIS Initiatives

1.1.2.1 Overview of GIS Utilization

Plum Creek has been involved with GIS since the early 1980's, making it one of the older GIS shops in the state. Traditionally it has used a software package named Strings, that was an early forestry product. Strings has its own proprietary data and software structures, but is not easily integrated with other environments. A converter is used to move proprietary files into the ESRI environment as .E00 export files.

Strings will be phased out of operation over the next 12-18 months. As part of the Georgia Pacific merger all operations will be moving to ESRI. ESRI is the GP standard for GIS.

1.1.2.2 GIS Operating Environment and Infrastructure

- (6) Licensees of ArcView 3.2
- Strings
- HP 750C Designjet plotter

1.1.2.3 GIS Data Resources and Requirements

1.1.2.3.1 Spatial Data

Existing data sets include:

- MeGIS base layers
- Forestry management and standtyping layers
- Forestry management history layers
- Soils
- Topography
- Imagery: Plum Creek maintains large quantities of aerial imagery of property and forest stands for inventory and analysis purposes. This is not orthorectified due to the extremely high cost of this process.

Currently unavailable but desired data sets include:

- Better and more current imagery. Many resolutions would be useful, from 10-meter SPOT down to 1-meter DOQQ type imagery that is available from MeGIS. But the most important factor is freshness of the data. Plum Creek is aware of the SPOT imagery licensed to the state for government and educational use, and would like access to it but isn't eligible.
- Completed sets of existing layers: Shoreland zoning, topographic rasters
- Shoreland zoning: Plum Creek has developed their own in the past but it is difficult to keep it current and there are many complexities that make maintenance exorbitant.

1.1.2.3.2 Attribute Data

- Forest stand type information

1.1.2.4 GIS Applications and Application Requirements

GIS is used primarily by foresters for management plans and field reference. ArcView licenses on laptops are used for this purpose, but users' familiarity with the software is very rudimentary. Plum Creek believes in centralized updating, and any serious analysis is done out of the office in Fairfield. The entire data library for the Plum Creek ownership area is loaded on the field machines and when updates are made everyone gets everything.

Within the broader Plum Creek corporation, the GIS working environment is not standardized.

Planned future GIS activity and applications:

- Planned migration away from Strings and fully into an ESRI Arc8/ArcView environment.

1.1.3 Other Relevant Issues

- All GIS data relating to forestry cover types, harvesting updates, and other asset related information is proprietary.
- Some of this data is submitted to the Maine Revenue Service in compliance with Tree Growth Tax Law filings, but submissions are paper hardcopy. Paper maps

are public record and contain summarized acres under different cover types.

There have been no requests to Plum Creek for digital submission of these data.

- Plum Creek must submit growth types to Maine Revenue Services every 10 years.
- Plum Creek is currently under fairly intense scrutiny for its development plans for 89 lots on 248 acres on the shores of First Roach Pond, 18 miles north of Greenville. GIS should be used as a tool for both advocates and adversaries of this plan to arrive at a mutually acceptable compromise.
- Plum Creek recognizes that numerous environmental and real estate groups in the state are consistently seeking access to their data.
- Jim Hatch concedes that making maps with GIS is really secondary. The novelty was good for a number of years, but most applications don't really need maps to be useful. The GIS is indispensable, but numerical totals are more important than the GIS pictures.

1.1.4 Major Benefits and Cost Justification

Access to State-acquired SPOT imagery would be beneficial to Plum Creek.